

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

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Providing the support ...



Cpl. Jensen J. Miller cuts a piece of steel inside the metalworkers shop for Detachment A, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, March 26. Miller and more than 40 other Marines with Detachment A are responsible for providing support to Marine aviation units. SEE RELATED STORY, PAGE 6. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Marines add marshalling pad to taxiway

Story by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL ASAD, Iraq – With the blistering sun on their backs and sweat dripping from their faces, the expeditionary airfield Marines with Marine Wing Support Squadron 274 began construction on a marshalling pad in Al Asad, April 19.

The marshalling pad will act as a waiting area for fighter or attack aircraft to be armed or disarmed before taking off.

“The marshalling pad is an extension to the already laid concrete areas on the airfield,” said Cpl. Michael P. Comi, expeditionary airfield systems technician, MWSS-274, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). “It gives more space for the aircraft to maneuver, as well as load weapons and disarm the missile systems that they use for combat operations.”

According to Comi, a 28-year-old native of Albany, N.Y., the pad is needed because there is not enough room on the airfield.

“We have a lot of traffic in this area

with the different fighter squadrons coming from all over the country to use this airfield,” said Comi, a graduate of George Wythe High School. “By adding onto it, as a marshalling pad is an extension to a taxiway, we are able to accommodate more squadrons.”

Although the new marshalling pad gives squadrons more room to maneuver their aircraft, it also provides some safety from the dangers on the flight line.

“We eliminate some of the safety hazards like aircraft coming into contact with ground equipment or each other while they are moving around out here on the airfield,” said Comi. “It also reduces traffic and improves the flow of it.”

However, if not installed properly, the mats can present a risk to the aircraft.

“Normally, there aren’t any problems or hazards to the aircraft with these mats,” said Cpl. Jesse J. Marcellin, expeditionary airfield systems technician, MWSS-274. “The problem we’ve been experiencing is

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Cpl. Bryan Jones carries two stakes to the edge of the nearly completed marshalling pad at Al Asad, Iraq, April 21. Jones is an expeditionary airfield systems technician with Marine Wing Support Squadron 274, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). He is a Pittsfield, Mass., native. Photo by Lance Cpl. James B. Hoke

FLIGHT JACKET



Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Helland
Commanding General
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing



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Commanding Officer
MCAS Miramar

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Public Affairs Deputy Director

Gunnery Sgt. Matthew L. Sewell
Public Affairs Chief

2nd Lt. Armando A. Daviu
Internal Information Officer

Cpl. Paul Leicht
Internal Information Chief

Lance Cpl. Robert W. Beaver
Layout

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Helping a child with tantrums

Story by Chuck Scherl

New Parent Support Program

SAN DIEGO – Sometimes toddlers can throw a tantrum, either at home, school or the store, that can be embarrassing for some parents.

Sometimes they throw a tantrum when they are tired or frustrated because they don't get what they want. Many times they don't know the words to tell their mother or father what they want. Toddlers are really not very good at solving problems. Even when they know how to solve a particular problem, they sometimes forget how to do it when they get angry.

If you stay calm, the tantrum usually won't get any worse, and when you are calm then toddlers tend to calm down a bit also, even if they don't do it right away. Please don't yell at the child, or shake them, or spank them. It will make the child more upset and maybe scare them and make it even more difficult for them to calm down.

Try to figure out what set the child off. They usually won't be able to tell you. Please do acknowledge that the child is upset. Here are some things that you can try saying "I can see that you are angry because ..." or "You are really disappointed that ..."

If they are able to see that you are trying to see their problems through their eyes you are showing them that you really love them and that you don't like seeing them unhappy.

If the toddler is out of control you can hold them and comfort them. Toddlers don't like feeling out of control and when you hold them they feel better. If you talk to toddlers calmly and tell them why you are holding them, they might understand. Try a little empathy "I know you are angry but I cannot let you hurt yourself or anybody else."

If possible take your toddler someplace away from everybody else until they can calm down. If they don't respond to you talking calmly to them or holding them, at least keep them safe and let the tantrum dissipate. Toddlers can't keep it up forever.

Sometimes distracting a toddler with something else helps if you can stay calm and get their attention. Good luck with this one.

When the toddler calms down please reassure them that you still love them. Sometimes they scare themselves when they throw a tantrum. They will stop throwing tantrums if you teach them safer and appropriate ways to manage their anger and frustration.

Do what you can to avoid allowing them to get into situations where they might throw a tantrum. If you can't avoid it entirely, remind them that we are coming into a situation where problems have happened in the past and remind them what is OK to do if they don't get what they want. Give them a few moments warning before they have to stop doing something that they like doing. "We are going to leave the park and go home and have lunch in a few minutes"

Offer them real choices that both the parents and the child can live with regardless of what the toddler chooses. "You can brush your teeth before you put your pajamas on, or you can brush your teeth after you are ready for bed. What do you choose?"

Toddlers don't really like to throw tantrums. Reminding our children that we love them will help during trying times and especially during tantrums.

For more information, call the Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Counseling Center at 577-6585 or the Child Development Center at 577-4144.

Military children need consistency

Story by Paul X. Rutz

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – Consistency is key for children as their military parents deploy, a university psychologist said.

Dr. Frederic Medway, psychology professor at the University of South Carolina, has been publishing research on family separation issues since 1987. He said his work has shown that while children of different ages have different needs, if parents offer as consistent an environment as possible, their kids tend to fare better.

"Set the tone early," Medway told American Forces Press Service during an interview at the Pentagon. "Try not to make many big changes while deployment happens."

That's easier to do with young children, he said. Parents have a lot more control when their children have not yet started school, and they should use that time to foster an environment of safety and stability because other challenges abound. Common childhood fears of things like animals and thunder often get compounded when children are thinking about a par-

ent in a hostile zone, and explaining away those fears is tricky.

"Younger children won't understand abstract concepts such as time," he said. Checking off dates on a calendar or explaining, "Mommy comes home in a year," may not make much sense to them, so keeping big changes to a minimum helps them feel better.

With school-age kids, the situation becomes more complex, Medway said. They have more going on in their lives at school and with friends. Offering a consistent environment can be difficult for the parent at home, especially if the parent is working as well as raising the child.

As children reach adolescent age, parents must be especially sensitive to what they are going through. "I think the teen years are especially tough because teens are notorious at not talking to their parents about things," Medway said. "I think this is a population that we as mental health people really need to watch out for."

Medway said young teens also have access to information and an ability to grasp it that younger children do not.

"Often they are worried, watching TV, CNN, hearing rumors," he said.

Another defining problem for adolescents is a wish to be the same as everyone else. Financial issues, lack of access to a car, clothes not jazzy enough, and other problems become an excuse to lash out, he said.

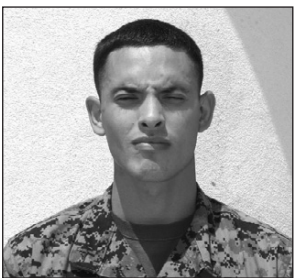
"I think, unfortunately, a lot of these children look for something to attribute that to, and in some cases they will get angry with the stay-at-home parent because the other parent is overseas, and their family isn't like everybody else," he said.

For these reasons and others, setting the tone early in terms of communication is critical to creating consistency for children once they go to school, Medway said.

"You've really got to start working on that open communication at age 4, because by the time your child hits 12 they may naturally shut down a little bit, and if you don't have good communication in the beginning, it's certainly going to be difficult by the time they're in that 12-to-14 range," he said.

Miramarks

Do you think payday lenders are good or bad? Why?



LCpl. Michael R. Ward
Electronics technician
MALS-16

"They are not good because they charge too much interest."



SSgt. Robert R. Barber
Hydraulic mechanic
MALS-11

"I don't like them. Marines already have money trouble and the lenders will put Marines further into debt."

Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Helland (left), commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Gordon Gray (center), deputy assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs, and Col. Paul C. Christian, commanding officer, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, pause for a photo opportunity after a professional military education meeting held April 19 at MCAS Miramar. Gray spoke to the air station's officers and staff noncommissioned officers on the nation's status in North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula and Iran. Photo by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin

Gray visits Miramar, speaks on Middle East

Story by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Gordon Gray, the deputy assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs, visited Marine Corps Air Station Miramar April 19, to educate officers and staff noncommissioned officers on our nation's status in the Middle East.

After arriving in San Diego, Gray met with Maj. Gen. Samuel T. Helland, commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, Col. Paul C. Christian, commanding officer, MCAS Miramar, and Col. Rick W. Schmidt, chief of staff, 3rd MAW.

Gray gave a professional military education brief to attending officers and staff NCOs. The brief outlined our nation's status in North Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and

Iran.

“There is no crisis at the moment,” said Gray. “We have a close working relationship with most of North Africa.”

Gray also stated that our nation is attempting to restore Algeria, while relationships with Egypt and Libya continue to grow.

Our hope is that we can once again be friends with the Iranian people as we once were before with no concern of terrorism, said Gray.

The nation is concerned with Iran encouraging the war on terrorism. They are known to help certain groups in Iraq that are currently against our efforts. Iran has supported terrorist groups for 20 years.

"Our nation is concerned for the treatment of the

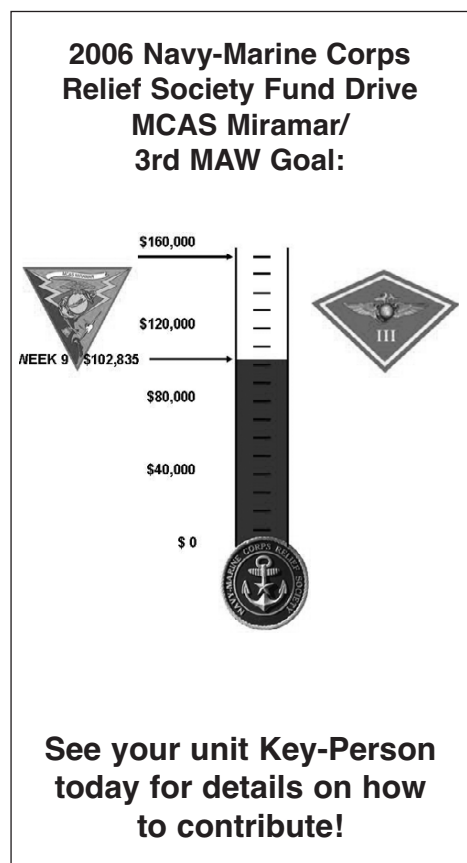
Iranian people,” said Gray. “The Iranian people do not have the freedom like we do.”

“We have excellent military cooperation and this is essential,” said Gray. “The president wants it to be clear that problems do not lie with the people, it is with the regime.”

We want to broadcast into Iran as much as possible to counter all the propaganda. Hopefully, this will allow the people to make their own decisions. This will eventually help us with support in Iran, said Gray.

We need this support in Iran because our Foreign Service officer affiliates in Iran are slowly retiring, which means our connection inside Iran is slowly dwindling.

"We want to maintain and improve our capabilities over there," said Gray. "We are trying our best to do this."



Airframe mechanics keep ‘Stallions’ flying

Story by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.
MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Airframe mechanics have a unique job among the Marines who help keep CH-53 Super Stallions in the sky. Their main mission is to maintain helicopters, ensuring they are able to fly at any time.

The airframe mechanics with Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, are specialists that work on the external components of the helicopter.

Their area of expertise includes hydraulic contamination, blade and pylon folds, and the auxiliary power plants, all of the hydraulic services and general servicing equipment.

For airframe mechanics, something as seemingly mundane as scraping corrosion off rotor blades and repainting them has a huge impact on aircraft safety. If corrosion is left anywhere on an aircraft it can get bad enough to render it useless. Corrosion can cause parts of the aircraft to bind up or fall off mid-flight. If the part is vital enough it could cause a crash.

Airframe mechanics are put through two eight-week courses after Marine Combat Training. The courses ensure the Marines are at the basic levels of proficiency needed in order

to function in the fleet.

“As with many jobs in the Marine Corps, most of the actual learning is done once a Marine gets to the fleet and actually gets to put his training to use,” said Cpl. Jesse J. Cochrane, airframe mechanic, HMM-462.

There are many qualification tests that the mechanics have to take to ensure they have learned the skills they need to complete every aspect of the job. Some of the qualifications include tire and wheel maintenance, all hydraulic service equipment and general service equipment.

“A Marine can go an entire enlistment and still not know everything about this aircraft,” said Cochrane, a Collings Lakes, N.J. native. “There are just too many parts.”

Talley is on the night crew at HMM-462. The night crew usually works around 10 hours a night and is tasked with making sure the helicopters are ready for any missions scheduled first thing in the morning.

“Our mission is to fix anything on the airframe that can stop a bird from flying the next day,” said Sgt. Nathaniel Hackett, CH-53E airframe mechanic, HMM-462. “This takes a lot of the load off of the day crew and makes it so they don’t have to come in at 5 a.m. or earlier.”



Cpl. Jesse J. Cochrane, airframe mechanic, Heavy Marine Helicopter Squadron 462, Marine Aircraft Group 16, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, spray paints a rotor blade of a CH-53E Super Stallion after removing corrosion with a wire brush. The corrosion removal and spray painting is to remove and prevent further corrosion. Corrosion removal and prevention are important in the upkeep of any aircraft to ensure mission readiness. Photo by Lance Cpl. Scott T. McAdam Jr.

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there are a few high spots on the ground, and they are making a lip between the concrete and the h-connector pad that will pinch a tire. That is the reason we have to have this perfectly level when it is finished.”

According to Marcellin, a 21-year-old Salt Lake City native, engineers come to the work site to smooth out all of the ground that the pad will be laying on, making it perfectly level with no voids, high spots or low spots.

“Once they are finished, we are going to take our mat and lay it out,” said the Cotton Wood High School graduate. “This one in particular is 144 feet long by 74 feet wide. We are going to take it, put it all down, and then, with each mat, we are going to have a locking bar going between them to keep it where we can’t pull them up.”

Depending on the number of people working on the marshalling pad, as well as

what problems persist during the process of laying it down, the extension can be completed in a few days.

“The ground work process probably takes the longest, as we have to coordinate with engineers to get it laid out,” said Comi. “Usually for us to lay down our matting and perform our job, it takes about three to four hours.

“The number of people that are used in the process depends on the efficiency of the crews who are working,” he added. “The maximum efficiency would be two six-man crews.”

According to Comi, the Marines with MWSS-274 are very enthusiastic about installing the marshalling pad.

“This is one of the main responsibilities we perform out here, and we have some of the finest and skilled Marines in the Expeditionary Airfields (military occupational specialty) working here,” he concluded. “So, it is going to be a job well done, and I’m pretty sure everyone will be satisfied with our performance.”

Iraq’s wild west tamed by ‘Gunfighters’

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich
3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL TAQADDUM, Iraq – More than 100 years have passed since the fastest pistol-drawing gunfighters dominated the saloons and streets of the American West. Halfway around the world, a different kind of gunfighter is leaving lasting marks on insurgent forces in Iraq’s own wild west, the Al Anbar Province.

Known as the “Gunfighters,” Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), have been patrolling the Iraqi skies with UH-1N Huey and AH-1W Super Cobra helicopters for nearly seven months, ready to fire their deadly arsenal of weapons on insurgent forces.

The helicopters’ weapons, ranging from mini-guns to missiles, would be simple window dressings in Iraq, if not for the swift efforts of the Gunfighters’ ordnance division Marines.

At the sound of the alarm, like colts bolting out of the gates at the Kentucky Derby, ordnance Marines race from their bunker-like trailers to the line of Hueys and Cobras to prepare for battle.

“When the alarm goes off, we’re on the run. A four-man team runs out to get the helicopter ready for the pilot,” said Lance Cpl. Nick W. Molthen, an aircraft ordnance technician and Seattle native. “This saves a lot of time because two separate

Marines can arm the weapons on each side while the others inspect, making sure everything is safe.”

Less than thirty seconds passed when the last weapons’ safety pins were pulled and the helicopters were ready for take off.

“Back in the United States, it’s common for the arming process to take a few minutes, but we’re not in a training environment here, so we instituted a new system to speed things up,” said Master Sgt. Alan W. Jones, the ordnance division chief. “Our goal was to get the birds out safely and as fast as possible without cutting any corners. Five days into the deployment I sat down with the team lead-

ers, took their input and (the new system) has worked ever since.”

The world record arming time is not why the ordnance Marines perform their jobs with such urgency. They do it to save lives.

“Every second saved in the arming process means we give the guys on the ground a better chance of making it,” said Jones, a Taylorville, Ill., native. “We hear back from the ground commanders expressing their appreciation for the quick support we give them.”

According to Molthen, the Marines hear rumors coming back to the squadron from ground units that whenever the Cobras and Hueys show up on the scene,

the shooting stops from the enemy. “That’s why I love this job. Arming the (helicopters), doing what I’m trained to do, and getting the mission done,” he said. It is that zeal for their role in the fight against insurgent forces in Iraq that has made it possible for the ordnance Marines to work long hours, and still stay focused on the task of arming the helicopters throughout their deployment. “These Marines have done an outstanding job over the past six months. Their performance has always been at the highest level,” said Jones. “There is no doubt in my mind that I have the best Marines in the Corps, and I have been doing this for 22 years.”



Lance Cpl. Micah E. Vogen loads an AGM-114 Hellfire missile aboard an AH-1W Super Cobra helicopter at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, March 25. Vogen and the ordnance division Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), are responsible for quickly arming Cobras and UH-1N Hueys before they fly out on missions. Vogen is an aircraft ordnance technician and Kansas City, Mo., native. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Marines provide aviation logistics support



Cpl. Jensen J. Miller cuts a piece of steel inside the metalworkers shop for Detachment A, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), at Al Taqaddum, Iraq, March 26. Miller and more than 40 other Marines with Detachment A are responsible for providing support to Marine aviation units here. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Story by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

AL TAQADDUM, Iraq – Helicopters break down, especially ones subjected to the rigors of combat missions like those flying out of Al Taqaddum, Iraq.

Always ready to apply their repair abilities to the helicopters are the Marines with Detachment A, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), who provide aviation logistics support day and night to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 and Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369.

The detachment of more than 40 Marines is broken down into different sections, each focusing on a specific piece of aviation logistics support.

Working out of scattered wooden shacks, cargo containers and a dirt covered hangar, the detachment’s Marines manufacture and repair the hundreds of parts making up CH-46 Sea Knights, UH-1N Hueys and AH-1W Super Cobras.

“We have 24 Marines working in our maintenance section,” said Gunnery Sgt. Sean P. Bosh, Det. A staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge. “Their job is repairing components on all three aircraft types so the work varies, especially with three different engine types. They troubleshoot the aircraft’s mechanics, always attempting to save parts through our

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Cpl. Clifford A. Davies fills out the necessary paperwork to check out batteries to Marines with Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369. Davies and more than 40 other Marines with Detachment A, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), are responsible for providing support to Marine aviation units in Al Taqaddum, Iraq. Davies is an aircraft electrical/instrument/flight control systems technician and Seattle native. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

**LOGISTICS,
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extensive repair ability before pulling them and getting a replacement.”

According to Bosh, three Marines in the electronic countermeasures section provide limited repair ability for the protective systems, but also fill the important role of escorts for the sensitive equipment when it is transported to a higher level facility for repair.

The smallest detachment section, manned by Cpl. Clifford A. Davies, is the battery section.

“I handle all the battery support for the squadrons and control hazardous materials for the detachment,” said Davies, an avionics technician and Seattle native.

According to Bosh, six Marines split evenly across three small sections are perhaps the busiest of all the Det. A personnel.

“Two Marines in the van maintenance section are constantly busy with maintaining the generators across the squadrons and the ones at the airfield here,” said Bosh, a Jacksonville, Fla., native. “Our two metalworkers are integral to the helicopter’s airframes. Their work saves the squadron a lot of time and money by keeping the birds up and flying.”

The busy schedule of the helicopter airframe mechanics, also known as metalworkers, and van maintainers is mirrored by two hydraulic technicians, who unceasingly inspect hydraulic parts

aboard the helicopters for cracks and defects.

“If problems are found, then we have the ability to manufacture and repair the necessary parts to keep the aircraft up,” said Cpl. Jeffery M. Wells, a hydraulic mechanic and Powder Springs, Ga., native. “We can manufacture low and medium pressure lines, but the ones we can’t fix are sent up to MALS-16 at Al Asad.”

The Det. A supply Marines provide the last link in the aviation logistics chain, supplying all the other sections and squadrons with the parts that they need.

Working nonstop, day and night, forces the Marines to learn new skills and become accustomed to intermittent sleep hours.

“I am a hydraulic mechanic, but today I’m learning how to bend steel in the weld shop,” said Wells. “You have to make yourself universal down here.”

Despite being detached from their squadron and living and working under austere conditions, the aviation logistics support Marines here expressed their affinity for their current role.

“It could be two in the morning when I get awakened to weld something,” said Cpl. Jensen J. Miller, an airframes mechanic and Onawa, Iowa, native. “Even with that, I love it down here. You get to see your work go up in the air right in front of you, knowing that the helicopters are going out to help the Marines in the field, be it casualty evacuation or air support.”



Lance Cpl. Charles A. Hutson holds a helicopter rotor blade prior to placing it on a scale. Hutson and more than 40 other Marines with Detachment A, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward), are responsible for providing support to Marine aviation units in Al Taqaddum, Iraq. Hutson is a helicopter/tiltrotor dynamic components mechanic and Exeter, Mo., native. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Military police patrol East Miramar

Story by Lance Cpl. George Papastrat

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Some people ride four-wheelers for recreational activity, however, military police officers with Marine Corps Air Station Miramar use these vehicles to ensure security and safety on the air station.

The East Miramar property line runs along the busy highways of San Diego, and sometimes trespassers cross through the fence lines into dangerous areas.

There are bike trails that lead directly onto the MCAS Miramar property. “The bikers turn around point is right on the firing line, and a cease fire must be called when they are spotted,” said Sgt. Jude J. Gronenthal, a military police officer at MCAS Miramar.

East Miramar runs along California Highway 52, and there are not enough posted signs to inform bikers they are on government property.

“This area of Miramar is patrolled by military police, who have taken the ATV safety course,” said Gronenthal. He also said that this area is patrolled about three times a week, mostly on the weekends.

“The Marines who patrol the area are all members of the special reaction team,” said Gronenthal.

In response to bike riders coming through Mission Gorge, new signs were posted on the trail to warn people that they are entering government property and can be charged with trespassing, he said.

“This area has been patrolled for about two years, it is important for base security,” said Cpl. Paul A. Williams, a military police officer at MCAS Miramar. “Some civilians do not know they are near the firing range as well as a drop zone for dummy bombs.”

“We most often find civilians riding either in their 4-wheel drive vehicles or bikes. On their first offense they



Sgt. Jude J. Gronenthal (left) along with Cpl William E Hargesheimer, both military police officers at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, look into the vast area of East Miramar April 29 through binoculars to ensure there are no trespassers on the government property. Photo by Lance Cpl. George Papastrat

are told they are trespassing on government property and escorted off,” said Williams. “On a second offense, they will get a citation for trespassing on government property.”

Gronenthal recalls one patrol he went on where they had found a homeless person’s shack that was so elaborate it had been painted green to blend in with the trees.

Another time he stopped for a water break along the fence line, when he noticed ATV tracks through the fence. Through observation, Sgt. Gronenthal noticed that the

fence had been cut, and then completely removed by the ATV riders. When the trespassers were finished with their rampage, they then secured the fence back together as if it were never cut down.

“We have been patrolling this area more now than ever,” said Gronenthal. “We also are going to post more signs.”

Not only is it important for security purposes, but for the safety of the civilians who are riding their bikes and by mistake cross into MCAS Miramar’s firing range.



Two military police officers at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, post a sign on a trail that runs from the 52 highway into East Miramar. Photo by Lance Cpl. George Papastrat

Marines cautioned to avoid payday lenders

Story by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin
MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

It’s a week before the next payday and you are already hurting for money. You’ve gone through each option you have but, those bills are not going to pay themselves. You think you can tough it out, but it will only hurt your credit. It feels as if no one wants to help and you feel yourself digging a deeper and deeper hole. So you go to a payday lender, which is someone who specializes in lending money in advance.

This seems appealing so the check is made. You feel you have rid yourself of the awful thought of debt.

What you don’t know is that the payday lenders that issued the advance check will charge up to 25 percent of the amount you wish to advance. For example, in a situation where a Marine borrows \$200, the lenders make \$50.

These situations usually turn into a cycle. The person needs money in advance but even more money is taken from the upcoming check. They then need more money in advance to make up for the money lost the check before. The yearly interest rate rises and rises until they are in over their head.

“Service members usually use the payday lenders as a last resort,” said Craig

Hughes, financial specialist, Marine Corps Community Services. “They need to learn what I do so they can use us instead of hurting their credit.”

Hughes works for MCCS and specializes in working with service members to control monthly budgets.

“I give the Marine or sailor information on how to chop away at their bills by cutting down their daily expenses,” said Hughes.

The service member will actually be put on a program where they will abide by the rules of the financial specialist and it will help the service member stop buying the pointless items that they do not

need. This program will also help more and more service members from buying into the schemes of the payday lenders.

“We’ve seen yearly interest rates almost up to 400 percent,” said Hughes. “We just hope we can get the word out to as many service members as possible so they will not be affected.”

“We at MCCS do not want service members to feel alone in their process of debt consolidation,” said Hughes. “We want to let them know that we are here to help.”

Any Marine or sailor seeking financial assistance, call 577-6585.

‘Black Thursday’ brings out the best of Miramar

Story by Lance Cpl. Taylor Poulin
MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines gather in the workout room of the Miramar Sports Complex also known as the “Main Gym,” to test and see who will be this month’s Black Thursday winner.

Black Thursday is held once a month for one year and its purpose is to challenge Marines in different areas of fitness.

For the first six months, the staff of the Miramar Sports Complex will plan out one event each month including vertical jump, 40-yard dash, 100-meter dash, maximum pull-ups, maximum dips, and maximum push-ups.

During the second half of the year, the same or new athletes will come back and try and beat the previous

winner of that event. “We want to keep the Marines around here challenged,” said Janis C. Rodriguez, fitness coordinator at the Main Gym. “If more and more athletes try this competition, we will have more Marines working out and training.”

Marines in shape can benefit more than just morale and participation. This can also lead to higher motivation levels and benefit work production.

Training in the gym calls for dedication and commitment. Most Marines show a spark of life with motivation and by challenging each other. These Black Thursdays are a good way to give the Marines something to train for.

“We want to give Marines a chance to have some bragging rights,” said Rodriguez. “It’s a better way for

Marines to train harder ... when their fellow Marines are holding it over their heads.”

The Semper Fit Center invites as many Marines as possible to their Black Thursday events. After each competition the winner is given a black shirt specially made for their accomplishment.

Currently, the record for max pull-ups is 42, while the record for dips is 105. The max push-ups record is 119, and the record for high jump is 34 inches. The record time for the 100-yard sprint is currently 9.47 seconds, and the record for 100-meter dash is 11.2 seconds. The record for the 440-yard dash is 55.44 seconds.

“We just try and keep the Marines motivated as much as we can,” said Rodriguez. “It’s something we enjoy everyday.”



Silhouetted at the cusp of daybreak, Rear Adm. Robert F. Burt, delivers his Easter message to deployed soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and civilians who joined him for the Easter sunrise service at Al Asad, Iraq, April 16. Burt is the U.S. Navy Deputy Chief of Chaplains and the Chaplain of the Marine Corps. Photo by Cpl. Jonathan K. Teslevich

Religious programs help service members

Story by Lance Cpl. Brandon L. Roach

3rd Marine Aircraft Wing

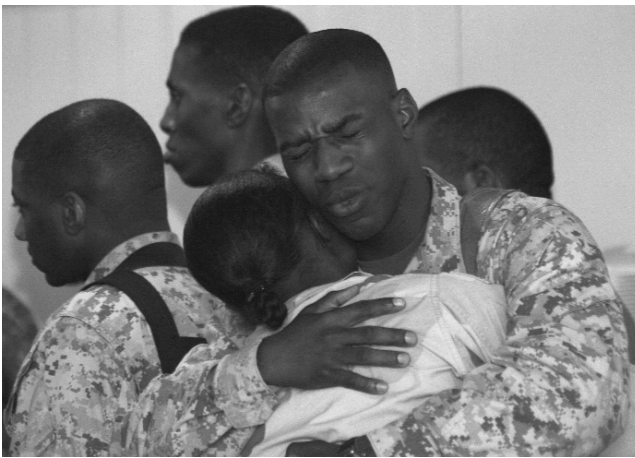
AL ASAD, Iraq – Combat stress can consist of many more things than just combat, and when times get tough, while deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom, service members turn to the Chaplain's Office for help.

"Our services are critical for those service members who wish to participate," said Cmdr. Craig G. Muehler, chaplain, Marine Wing Headquarters Squadron 3, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). "We offer services for all religions and denominations."

During deployment, service members go through problems such as marital difficulties, depression and overall loneliness which can take their mind off their safety and job.

"When you don't have a presence of family or friends, the only thing left to help you when you're alone is your faith," said Petty Officer 3rd Class C. D. Coley, religious programs specialist, MWHS-3.

Many people just look to the Chaplain's Office



1st Lt. Tommie Williams shares a hug with a fellow service member during a gospel choir practice at Al Asad, Iraq, April 15. Williams is the intelligence officer-in-charge for Marine Wing Support Squadron 274, Marine Wing Support Group 37 (Reinforced), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing (Forward). Photo by Lance Cpl. Brandon L. Roach

as a positive way to relieve stress by doing activities that have been arranged by the Religious Programs personnel.

"When deployed, you have time to sit down

and think about what's going on around you," said Sgt. Requilda N. Quintana, supply chief, MWHS-3. "You can also find companionship and it's a good place to open up and relieve stress."

As well as counseling and religion, the Chaplain's Office offers many other types of services to help people that are interested.

"We have bible studies, choirs, tours of the oasis and we hold special services for service members wounded or killed in action," stated Muehler.

The Chaplain's Office is also a point where people from the United States send many care packages to service members that are distributed to deployed personnel.

They also work directly with the Key Volunteers Program in the states as well as organizing visits for several religious people to speak with service members.

With the motto of provide, facilitate and care, the religious programs offered in theater will help service members through what could be one of the hardest times in their life.



Is this your Chevy?

The above vehicle has been marked for impound by the Provost Marshal’s Office. To avoid having the vehicle towed, please store it in the Marine Corps Community Services or Traffic Management Office lots. Abandoned vehicles at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar present security risks as well as enviromental and safety concerns. PMS attempts to identify and contact vehicle owners of illegally parked, abandoned vehicles prior to tagging the vehicle with a Department of Defense notice. Vehicles are then scheduled for towing three days following the notice. For more information, call 577-1276/4139.

The following vehicles have been impounded and need to be claimed by the owners. Towing fees average \$113, storage fees \$28 daily. For more information call 577-1461.

Vehicle:	License:
Mitsubishi Eclipse	CA#5DAX061
Honda CX	CA#5ERW727
Suzuki GSXR	CA#17E7224
Ford E350	CA#4LNX778
Motorcycle Trailor	VA#CT497383

Miramar Movies

The Bob Hope Theater is located in Building 2242, and will be featuring the following movies. Outside food and drinks are not permitted. For more information, call 577-4143 or log on to www.mccsmiramar.com.

Friday:
6:30 p.m. Ice Age 2: The Meltdown (PG)
9:00 p.m. V For Vendetta (R)

Saturday:
6:30 p.m. The Shaggy Dog (PG)
9:00 p.m. She’s The Man (PG-13)

Sunday:
1:00 p.m. *Aquamarine (PG)
6:30 p.m. *16 Blocks (PG-13)

Wednesday:
6:30 p.m. Slither (R)

Thursday:
2:00 p.m. Dreamer:
Inspired by a true story (G)
6:30 p.m. V for Vendetta (R)

* Indicates the last showing for that film.

Mom or Dad Deployed?

The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Youth and Teen Center is hosting a gathering for children of deployed Marines and sailors every first and third Monday of each month.
Children ages 8 to 10 meet from 3:30 to 4:15 p.m., ages 11 to 13 meet from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. For more information, call 577-1322.

Religious Services

The Chaplain’s Office is located in Building 5632 and coordinates regularly-scheduled worship services. For the location and meeting schedules of religious activities, contact the Chaplain’s Office at 577-1333.

Sunday:
9:30 a.m. Protestant worship service
11 a.m. Roman Catholic Eucharist

Wednesday:
7 p.m. Baptist service

Monday-Friday:
11:30 a.m. Roman Catholic daily mass

Jewish:
7 p.m. First Friday of the month MCRD
7:30 p.m. Last Friday at Edson Range Chapel

APES and Promotions Briefs

An Automated Performance Evaluation System brief will be held Wednesday at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar’s Bob Hope Theater.
The promotions briefs will be held May 15 also at the theater. Officer briefs will be at 8:30 to 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Enlisted briefs will be at 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. For more information, call (858) 577-4920.

USS Ticonderoga Reunion

The USS Ticonderoga Veterans’ Association is holding its annual reunion May 24 to 28 at the Wyndham Hotel in San Diego.
The reunion, available to all Naval veterans who served aboard the ship, will include a touring of the USS Midway, Seaport Village, the San Diego Zoo and Marine Corps Air Station Miramar.
For more information, call (619) 442-8605.

Bike to Work Day

The San Diego Association of Governments and the California Bicycle Coalition is sponsoring Bike To Work Day May 19 as part of the 12th annual California Bike Commute Week.
Marine Corps Air Station Miramar will host one of the many “Pit Stops” that are spread throughout the San Diego region.
For more information, call 577-1623.